

9 February 1981  
MNC-1005

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director FBIS

THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT : Monthly Report--Nicosia Bureau--January 1981

## I. GENERAL

Nicosia Bureau experienced several major changes in coverage and procedures in January. The bureau's increasing absorption with Iran coverage was eased with the 20 January release of the U.S. Embassy staff in Tehran, and coverage of the PLO's Voice of Palestine radio was transferred from the bureau at the end of the month. The slack created by the loss of this coverage, however, had already been taken up earlier in the month when the bureau acquired full coverage of Greece upon the 15 January closedown of Athens Unit. On 22 January the bureau launched a long-awaited, completely overhauled routing services system. On the same day the bureau began a field capitalization test for the DAILY REPORT'S MIDAS automation project.

## II. OPERATIONS

### A. Editorial/Monitorial

1. On 16 January Nicosia assumed full coverage for Greece upon the closure of Athens Unit.
2. On 3 January the Middle East bureaus implemented a new Persian coverage plan under which the bureau is now involved in coverage of Baghdad Persian, Beijing Persian and the clandestine radios Free Voice of Iran and Radio Iran.
3. Coverage of the PLO's clandestine Voice of Palestine radio, which had been temporarily assumed by Nicosia in December of 1979, was transferred back to Jordan Bureau on 31 January. Reception from the radio is currently poor at both bureaus, and Nicosia is backstop recording all casts until reception improves at Jordan.
4. AFP Coverage of the African continent was renegotiated on 12 January. Nicosia now has primary responsibility for Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Somalia, and Abidjan Bureau has primary responsibility for the rest of the continent. In addition to this breakdown for Africa, Nicosia is also responsible for coverage of Latin American from the English-language beam when Panama is closed as well as for the Middle East (including Iran), East and West Europe and the Soviet Union.

5. On 30 January the bureau's backstop recording of Tehran Domestic Service for BBC was cut back to one cast a day (the 2030 GMT cast when Gulf Bureau is closed). Since September of 1980 the bureau had been backstop recording Tehran radio for 17 hours a day. Nicosia provided five phone patches, totaling 148 minutes of coverage, to BBC during the month.

6. On 5 January the bureau began a new Turkish press selection system as suggested by contract Turkish Monitor [ ] whereby the monitor prepares a written press summary for the editor's use to take the place of the old system which involved long and often garbled telephone conversations between north and south Cyprus.

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7. The bureau began a "pinkie-code" field capitalization test for the DAILY REPORT's MIDAS automation project on 22 January. Actual pinkie-coding had to be suspended almost immediately, however, as the experimental copy was being rejected by lateral consumers. Headquarters and the bureau are working on remedying this problem.

8. The bureau's lateral services system has been completely overhauled by Deputy Chief [ ]. The new system uses numbered tapes and a "building-block" approach developed to meld easily with the Lateral Services List. The system, which has been under development since last September, was ready for launch on 22 January despite Headquarter's complete restructuring of the Lateral Service's Mideast Alert packages on 19 January.

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9. In a 23 January agreement with Headquarters following a regionwide communications outage in late December which left bureaus unaware that other bureaus in the region were also out, Nicosia will now telex Jordan and Tel Aviv Bureaus separately during prolonged outages to determine the status of their circuits. Gulf Bureau does not have telex capability. yst.

10. On 27 January, at the bureau's request, Headquarters reaffirmed the need for the present low-threshold selection requirements for reports on armed clashes in Lebanon.

11. On 5 January BBC asked the bureau to monitor the 1900 GMT Kabul English Service casts temporarily to provide expeditious coverage of a controversial UK Labor Party MP delegation visit to Afghanistan. The cast was not monitorable at Nicosia, however, and coverage was taken by Gulf Bureau.

12. On 25 January the bureau recorded Yerevan Domestic Service 0600--0800 GMT at BBC's request for an expected report on the Yerevan CP Congress proceedings. The recording was airmailed to Caversham for processing by BBC.

13. On 25 January the bureau covered Jerusalem Domestic Service Hebrew casts for Tel Aviv Bureau during a scheduled power outage there.

## B. Lateral/Special Services

1. On 3 January the bureau duty editor informed the Embassy political officer about a Nicosia radio report of a car bombing incident in Limassol in which a Syrian journalist who had been a cofounder of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine was injured. Later that evening the political officer was once again notified that a foreigner had been arrested in connection with the incident.

2. On 31 January the duty editor called the Embassy political officer about an AFP report that four French Mirages had landed at Larnaca airport to refuel and to pick up Iraqi crews, who had apparently arrived at Larnaca 2 days earlier aboard a "Soviet" (later identified as a Jordanian) jet.

## III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Greek Monitors [ ] arrived in Cyprus on 24 January. They joined the bureau's Greek section as of 1 February. STAT

B. Regional Engineer [ ] visited Brindisi, Italy, on TDY 26-30 January. STAT

C. Senior Arabic Monitor [ ] returned to Cyprus 10 January following a successful heart bypass operation in Great Britain. Joe is scheduled to return to duty in March. STAT

D. Bureau Technician [ ] underwent a successful eye operation in Jerusalem on 10 January. Andreas is scheduled to return to duty in early February. STAT

[ ]

Nicosia Bureau Chief

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## ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Operations (including Production and Traffic Reports)
- B. Engineering Report